



## Press Clipping Article

**Title:** Meat processing business plans July opening

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**Writer:** AMEERAH CETAWAYO

**Lead:**

A new meat processing business in southcentral Kentucky is edging closer to opening next month.

### Article:

A new meat processing business in southcentral Kentucky is edging closer to opening next month.

Right now, John's Custom Meats LLC is taking orders for farm-fresh Kentucky Proud beef and pork, which will be inspected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, in a retail area in the front of the 5,600-square-foot processing plant in Smiths Grove, according to owner John Rediess.

Customers will be able to purchase USDA prime, choice and select meats by the cut or in packages, he said.

"We're currently doing custom processing and finishing up for our USDA inspection and hope to start retailing sometime in July," Rediess said. "We're currently taking orders for freezer beef so we can get the farmers to put them on feed."

Rediess said he is already getting a lot of calls, and people are even showing up at his facility to buy meat.

He said everything is falling into place at the moment.

"We have the area inspector and the local inspector here and our stamps have been ordered and the USDA paperwork is (nearing) completion," Rediess said.

Warren Beeler, livestock marketer for the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, said since Rediess' facility sits on the Barren and Warren counties' line - two of the best livestock counties in the state of Kentucky - he will be busy.

"Most of these places are just overrun, because we just don't have enough of them," Beeler said.

Kentucky has fewer than 20 USDA inspected plants scattered throughout the state from

Hopkinsville, all the way to Ashland, Beeler said.

Beeler said meat lovers in southcentral Kentucky will most likely benefit from Rediess' 40 years of experience in the meat processing business.

Rediess, who Beeler said is well-known in the area for his summer sausage, welcomes deer hunters looking to process their venison this fall. He plans to accept sheep, goats and even rabbits as the business grows.

The processing facility started accepting livestock on May 7, according to the KDA.

Beeler said there's a push for more locally grown products as many consumers remain concerned about food that is transported and distributed several times before it hits grocery store shelves.

Rediess said mass transported food is open to several vulnerabilities in the supply chain that allow for contamination.

Buying directly from local farmers provides relief about such concerns, he said.

"It's an opportunity for the consumers to support their local farmers and they're knowing where that meat is coming from," Rediess said.

Beeler said the KDA, through a contract with USDA and funding from the Agricultural Development Board, has an employee trained to grade beef carcasses for quality as a way for producers to add value to their meat.

The Agriculture Development Board provided Rediess a \$245,000 forgivable loan, and Warren County added a \$5,000 grant, according to Beeler.

The money allowed Rediess to upgrade from a custom operation to a USDA-inspected slaughter facility providing livestock producers an opportunity to sell value-added meats directly to consumers.

- Contact John's Custom Meats at 563-4048. The business is located on Ky. 1297 at the Warren-Barren county line, eight miles south of the Smiths Grove exit on Interstate 65. Directions: After exiting I-65, turn left on Ky. 101 south. Go 4.5 miles, then turn left on Ky. 1297. Go 2.5 miles, then turn left on Hydro-Pondsville Road. John's Custom Meats is located seven-tenths of a mile away on the right.

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